illegal trade in wild life, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme has been initiated. This scheme provides for equal sharing of the non-recurring cost between the Central and State Government. Rs. 3.00 crores is the VII Plan outlay under this Scheme.

(vi) Patrol guards are being suitably armed and deployed.

(vii) The Central Wildlife Division is being strengthened.

(viii) The Wild life (Protection) Amendment Act, 1986 has laid down that dealers in imported ivory for trade and manufacture will also require a licence. No such licences will be given for Indian ivory.

(ix) Import and re-export of articles made from ivory of African origin is regulated as per the provisions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

News-item captioned "Presidents' Medal for Controversial U.P. Official"

724. SHRI DINKARRAO GOVINDRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item which appeared in the "Times of India" of the 13th December, 1986 captioned "President's Medal for controversial U.P. Official" if so, what are the details thereof?

(b) whether any inquiry has been ordered in this regard; and

(c) if so, what is the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) The Police Medal for meritorious service was awarded on the occasion of Republic Day, 1984, after the Government of U.P. had certified the integrity of Shri Lakshmi Saroop Saxena and had also certified that no inquiry was pending against him.

The Government has seen the news-item. As the matter primarily concerns the Government of U.P., it has been brought to their notice for appropriate action.

EPF Investment Policy

725. SHRI DINKARRAO GOVINDRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy has suggested to Government to revise Employees' Provident Fund investment policy so that subscribers may derive benefit of the high interest rates;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what action Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The National Institute of Public Finance and Policy have in their report on appraisal of provident fund and allied schemes recommended *inter-alia* that the existing pattern of investment for the provident fund may be revised and the organisation may be permitted to invest

the money in Bonds and Debentures of Public Sector Undertaking and fixed deposit schemes of well established public and private sector companies, so as to earn more interest.

(c) The report of the Committee is presently under consideration of the Central Board of Trustees, Employees' Provident Fund. The question of taking any action at the Government's level does not, therefore, arise at this stage.

Foreign nationals illegally staying back in the country

726. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
SHRI K. GOPALAN:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of foreign nationals who have been found absconding as on date after the expiry of visa permit and who have not yet returned to their countries of origin;

(b) what is their figures nationality-wise;

(c) what is the State-wise break-up of the visa permits issued to them;

(d) what is the estimated strength of foreign nationals illegally staying in the country at present; and

(e) what steps are being taken to trace illegal immigrants and foreign nationals and deport them back?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) to (d) No statistics in this regard are maintained by the Central Government.

(e) As and when any foreigner overstays, his authorised stay in India and is detected living unauthorisedly beyond the expiry of his valid visa, action under the law is taken by the State Governments/Union Territories who have been delegated powers in this regard.

Seizure of antiques

727. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:
SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
SHRI SHANTI TYAGI:
SHRI RAM CHANDRA VIKAL:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that antiques worth more than rupees one crore were seized in the Capital on the 9th February, 1987;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether any arrest has been made in this regard; and

(d) if so, what action is being taken by Government against the persons involved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (d) 2 members of a gang of smugglers suspected to be in possession of stolen antiques were arrested at Satna, Madhya Pradesh on 24-1-1987. One more member of the gang was arrested in Delhi on the 25th January, 1987. On the basis of information revealed by the persons arrested, the Central Bureau of Investigation conducted raids in the shops and godowns of some dealers in Jama Masjid area in the first week of February, 1987. About 185 suspected antiques stolen from historic monuments etc. from various parts of the country and worth crores of rupees in the international market were seized.